FuelsEurope
FUELLING EUROPE'S FUTURE

PRESS RELEASE

A strong alarm signal to the Heads of State from the refining and fuel manufacturing industry

Brussels, 12 February 2026: Ahead of the Retreat of Heads of State in Alden Biesen, FuelsEurope formally addressed the 27 EU Heads of State and Government with a clear and urgent warning that Europe's refining and fuel manufacturing industry, a cornerstone of Europe's industrial power, is under unprecedented pressure. We urge Europe's leaders to show decisive political leadership and take immediate action to safeguard a sector that is indispensable to Europe's security, competitiveness and climate ambition.

At a time of geopolitical instability and intensifying global competition, Europe cannot afford further industrial erosion. It cannot afford to lose more of its refineries. During geopolitical shocks and supply disruptions, the refining and fuel manufacturing sector is not optional, it is indispensable to keeping Europe moving, supplied and secure.

Nonetheless, the warning signs are unmistakable. Since 2009, 35 refineries have closed, reducing its capacity by 20%, while energy and carbon costs remain structurally higher than in competing regions. Europe is already a net importer of diesel and jet fuel. **Without corrective action, this dependency will deepen and expand to other critical products**.

Refining underpins Europe's energy security, defence readiness, mobility, chemicals and industrial value chains. There is no substitute at scale for these uses. The competitiveness of Europe's refineries today will determine whether the massive investments required for their transition to renewable and low-carbon products are anchored in Europe, or redirected to other regions.

In a letter co-signed by FuelsEurope President Luis Cabra and Director General Liana Gouta, FuelsEurope calls on EU leaders to take immediate and decisive action to:

- **Ensure the competitiveness of our industry** by addressing excessive carbon costs, ensuring effective carbon leakage protection, and reducing regulatory and administrative burdens that are accelerating deindustrialisation.
- **Enable credible investment cases for renewable and low-carbon fuels and energy products** by preserving technology neutrality, better synchronising regulation with technological development, ensuring access to finance and sustainable feedstocks, and creating lead markets.
- **Launch a High-Level Strategic Dialogue on the future of Europe's refining sector**, bringing together policymakers and all linked value chains, aviation, maritime, road transport, chemicals, defence, agriculture, forestry and waste management. This cross-sectoral Dialogue must deliver **a concrete Action Plan** with a clear timeline to restore competitiveness, secure investment and enable transformation across the entire ecosystem that relies on refinery products.

Europe cannot deliver climate ambition, competitiveness or strategic autonomy without a strong refining sector. This is not a sectoral appeal. It is a strategic imperative for Europe's economy and security.

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The European refining industry stands ready to invest, transform and deliver, but the window for action is narrowing. The call to Europe's Heads of State and Government for political leadership and bold, immediate actions has never been clearer or more urgent.

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Note to the editors: The letter is attached to the email and can be found here.

FuelsEurope, the voice of the European fuel manufacturing industry. FuelsEurope represents, within the EU institutions, the interest of 40 companies manufacturing and distributing conventional and renewable fuels and products for mobility, energy & feedstocks for industrial value chains in the EU.

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